

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 COME-00 EB-07
LAB-04 SIL-01 MCT-01 AID-05 PC-01 FEAE-00 OES-07
ERDA-05 TRSE-00 OC-06 CCO-00 /113 W
-----052451 141544Z /45

P R 141130Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9099
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 5348

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, PINT, PGOV, GH
SUBJECT: STANDOFF CONTINUES

REF: ACCRA 5244

LONDON FOR SEITZ

1. SUMMARY: STRIKING REFINERY WORKERS HAVE AT LEAST
TEMPORARILY RETURNED TO WORK AND SOME GASOLINE IS
FLOWING TO STATIONS IN ACCRA AND OTHER CITIES. DOCTORS,
NURSES, LAWYERS, ENGINEERS, ACCOUNTANTS AND OTHER
PROFESSIONALS REMAIN ON STRIKE. THERE WERE REPEATED
POWER OUTAGES JULY 12-13 AND WATER IS OFF IN MOST PARTS
OF ACCRA AS OF MONRING JULY 14. END SUMMARY

2. AFTER SOME UNCERTAINTY, IT NOW APPEARS THAT ALL OR
MOST STRIKING WORKERS OF GHANA-ITALIAN PETROLEUM
COMPANY (GHAIP) AT TEMA HAVE GONE BACK TO WORK.

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THEIR WILDCAT STRIKE, PROTESTING INADEQUATE
MEDICAL TREATMENT FOR WORKERS INJURED ON THE JOB,
WAS REPORTEDLY SETTLED AFTER PROTRACTED NEGOTIATIONS
WITH COMMISSIONER FOR NRC AFFAIRS E.K. BUCKMAN. GOG
HAS UNDERTAKEN TO STATION MILITARY DOCTORS AT
REFINERY SINCE CIVILIAN DOCTORS ARE STILL ON STRIKE.
WORKERS RETURNED BRIEFLY TO JOBS AFTERNOON JULY 12

BUT STRUCK AGAIN MORNING JULY 13 IN PROTEST AT GOG CLAIM IN PRESS THAT UNION HAD APOLOGIZED TO PUBLIC FOR INCONVENIENCE CAUSED BY STRIKE. WORKERS SAID THEY HAD NOT APOLOGIZED AND DID NOT RETURN TO WORK UNTIL LATE JULY 13. BY MORNING JULY 14 SOME GASOLINE WAS BEING SOLD IN ACCRA. VEHICLE TRAFFIC HAS DECREASED SHARPLY OVER PAST FOUR DAYS AND WITHOUT NEW SUPPLIES MOST CARS AND TRUCKS WOULD HAVE BEEN OFF THE ROAD BY END OF THIS WEEK. ASSUMING REFINERY WORKERS DO NOT GO BACK ON STRIKE, FUEL SITUATION SHOULD NOW BEGIN TO EASE. GOG CLAIMS THERE IS ENOUGH REFINED STOCK IN STORAGE TO LAST COUNTRY FOR THREE WEEKS (WE THINK ONE WEEK IS MORE ACCURATE) AND SAYS PROCESSING OF CRUDE WILL START JULY 14.

3. SITUATION WITH STRIKING PROFESSIONALS IS SOMEWHAT MURKY. WE UNDERSTAND SMC WANTED TO MEET WITH GHANA BAR ASSOCIATION BUT MEETING DID NOT COME OFF JULY 11 BECAUSE BADLY-INFORMED TROOPS SENT LAWYERS PACKING. PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION REPS MET WITH ACHEAMPONG AND SMC JULY 12 BUT MEETING WAS ABORTED AFTER FIVE MINUTES FOR LACK OF A QUORUM AMONG REPS. AT SUBSEQUENT MEETING ON JULY 13 ACHEAMPONG REPORTEDLY PUT OUT WORD THAT UNION GOVERNMENT WAS TO BE PLAYED DOWN AND ALSO AGREED TO ANNOUNCE SPECIFIC TEMETABLE FOR RETURN TO CONSTITUTIONAL RULE (SEPTTEL).
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4. LAWYERS, DOCTORS, NURSES, ENGINEERS, ACCOUNTANTS AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS ARE STILL ON STRIKE. HOWEVER, A FEW DOCTORS ARE TREATING EMERGENCY CASES AT KARLE BU HOSPITAL. ONE OF THESE DOCTORS, HAVING WORKED ALL NIGHT, WAS BEATEN UP BY THUGS IN THE HOSPITAL THE NEXT MORNING. THESE HEAVIES WERE DRESSED IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES BUT ARE WIDELY BELIEVED TO BE GOG AGENTS. OTHER DOCTORS REPORT BEING ROUGHED UP BY TROOPS AND AT LEAST ONE HAS HAD HIS HOUSE RANSACKED. DOCTORS ARE DEEPLY ANGERED BY THIS ABUSE AND HAVE STRONGLY PROTESTED TO ACHEAMPONG. ON JULY 12 ACHEAMPONG REPORTEDLY ASSURED ONE PROMINENT DOCTOR THAT STRONG-ARM TACTICS WILL CEASE. THIS DOCTOR HAS MOVED BACK IN TO HIS KORLE BU HOUSE BUT IS LEAVING HIS FAMILY ELSEWHERE FOR SAFETY'S SAKE. PROFESSIONALS ARE SLATED TO MEET AGAIN WITH SMC MORNING OF JULY 14.

5. ACCRA WAS BLACKED OUT SEVERAL TIMES DURING NIGHT OF JULY 12 AND REPEATEDLY DURING DAY OF JULY 13. WE DO NOT KNOW REASONS FOR OUTAGES BUT WE, PUBLIC AND GOG SECURITY OFFICERS BELIEVE THEY WERE DUE TO SABOTAGE.

WHILE PARTS OF TEMA WERE ALSO AFFECTED, VALCO ALUMINUM PLANT WAS NOT RPT NOT THIS TIME. OFFICIAL EXPLANATION WAS THAT FAILURES WERE DUE TO FAULTS IN SUBSTATION IN EASTERN ACCRA: RADIO LISTENERS WERE TOLD THERE WAS "NO CAUSE FOR ALARM." WHILE POWER WAS ON AS OF MORNING JULY 14, WATER IN POST PARTS OF CITY (INCLUDING CHANCERY AREA AND NEIGHBORHOODS WHERE MOST MISSION PERSONNEL LIVE) IS OFF.

6. THUS IN GENERAL, STANDOFF BETWEEN SMC AND PROFESSIONALS CONTINUES, WITH ANOTHER NEGOTIATING SESSION SET FOR TODAY.
SMITH

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION, LABOR STRIKES, REFINERIES
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Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977ACCRA05348
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770251-0012
Format: TEL
From: ACCRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770760/aaaabzer.tel
Line Count: 128
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 943bd76b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 ACCRA 5244
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 03-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1870111
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: STANDOFF CONTINUES
TAGS: PINS, PINT, PGOV, GH
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/943bd76b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009